



## Questions and Answers

### *What is the North Palm River Drinking Water Project?*

This project will provide the North Palm River community (north of Causeway Boulevard, east of 54<sup>th</sup> St., south of 12<sup>th</sup> Ave., and west of 70<sup>th</sup> St.) with access to high-quality drinking water and improve fire protection in the area. The project includes designing, permitting and constructing more than 5 miles of 6- and 8-inch diameter pipeline and installing approximately 90 fire hydrants along the pipeline route. The project also includes connecting homes to the new drinking water line.

### *How did the project come about?*

The North Palm River Drinking Water Project was approved by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners as part of its Capital Improvement Program. The project will provide a reliable, affordable supply of drinking water so the Palm River community can continue to grow and thrive.

### *How much does it cost for a homeowner to connect?*

During the initial one-year connection period, Hillsborough County will offer funding support so a homeowner can connect to municipal water with minimal cost. Specifically, the County will cover the cost of on-site plumbing connections to each home and other associated fees. Homeowners who want to connect will only be responsible for a deposit on the account plus his or her monthly water bill. Monthly water bills will vary from house to house. The typical monthly bill for a family that uses 7,000 gallons per month is approximately \$40 for water only. The water customer deposit is \$55 for a homeowner and \$90 for a renter. However, the deposit may be waived for those who pass a credit check conducted by Hillsborough County's Public Utilities Department's consumer reporting agency. **Please note, a renter can only sign up for a water account if the property owner elects to connect the home to the municipal system.**

### *Do I get my deposit back?*

Upon written request, a deposit may be credited back to the customer's account after two years of service and consecutive on-time payments.

### *Do I have to connect to County water?*

**Connecting to the County's water supply is optional, but funding support is only available for one year from the time of availability.** If a homeowner decides to connect after the first year of availability, the homeowner will be responsible for on-site connection fees and any other applicable fees, which could exceed \$3,800. When considering whether to connect, it is important that property owners know that once there is access to a municipal water supply, the Southwest Florida Water Management District will no longer issue domestic well permits in the area.

***How do I request a connection?***

Information on requesting a connection and setting up a utility account will be available after construction begins. County staff and the project team will work closely with the community to make information easily available to you. Please note, if you are a renter, the property owner must elect to connect the property to the municipal system before you can sign up for a new utility account.

***What is the project schedule?***

The County plans to begin installing drinking water pipelines in early 2017. Construction will last for approximately 18 months.

***How long will it be until homes can connect to County water?***

Connections from the water meters to homes could begin by fall 2017. Pipeline construction and home connection construction will overlap. First, a contractor will design, permit and install the drinking water pipelines. Then as sections of that work are completed and pipelines placed in service, County-approved plumbing contractors will begin connecting homes to the completed pipelines.

***If I connect, can I keep my existing well?***

Yes. Property owners may keep their existing wells for irrigation purposes only. Once you are connected to County water, your existing well can no longer be used for drinking water.

***Where will my meter be installed?***

Meters will be installed within the public right-of-way near the owner's property line.

***Where will the line from my house to the pipeline be located?***

Each property connection will vary, but in general, the contractor will go the shortest distance from where your well connects to the home to the water main.

***Where will the fire hydrants be located?***

Fire hydrants will be installed in the right-of-way about every 500 feet along the new water line.

***Will the County also be extending wastewater service?***

No. There are no plans to extend wastewater service at this time.

***How will the County install the new water lines?***

To minimize impacts to the neighborhood and homes, most of the pipelines will be installed using a trenchless construction method called directional drilling. Directional drilling uses specialized construction equipment to install the pipeline by tunneling under roadways and driveways. Plumbing contractors typically dig small trenches or ditches to install a water line from the meter to a home.

***There are children in the area that ride their bikes and walk to school. Will construction affect them?***

Yes. Once construction begins, the contractor will work closely with the neighborhood to keep residents informed of what roads will be affected. Parents/guardians and children should be mindful of construction and plan their routes to school accordingly. The project team is working with area schools to distribute information to keep parents and guardians informed. During construction, most roads will have one lane closed. The contractor will provide advance notification of construction and provide signage to help keep pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists moving safely.

***Will the roads be fully repaved?***

Yes. Once the pipelines have been installed and all properties wanting service are connected, the affected roads will be fully repaved.

***Will you run a line to vacant lots?***

The County will install a connection point off of the new distribution line to each numbered parcel in the project area to facilitate connection in the future, once a structure is built on the property.

***Can non-residential properties, like churches or businesses, be connected?***

Yes. Each non-residential account is handled individually to accommodate the specific needs of the new connection. If you are interested in a non-residential account, please call George Goodwin, Development Services/Utility Review at (813) 272-5600.

***Will the County be installing drinking water lines south of Causeway Boulevard?***

At this time, municipal water service is being provided to the North Palm River community only. The County is exploring funding options for the South Palm River community, and we will keep the community informed if and when funding becomes available.

***Where can I get more information?***

For more information on the project, go to [HCFLGov.net/CountyProjects](http://HCFLGov.net/CountyProjects), click on County Water & Sewer Projects, then click on North Palm River Drinking Water Project. Additionally, fact sheets and information will be available at the Palm River Point Community Development Corporation as well as the 78th Street Public Library. If you have construction-related concerns, please contact Brian Beukema at (941) 720-6902.